

Findings of a Study on Risks, Threats, Resilience and School Bonding Factors in 5 Caricom Countries

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Regional Forum on Youth Crime & Violence:
Youth crime and violence – Breaking the cycle exploring
new platforms for transformation



Context

Literature shows...

- **Escalation of violence** in schools
- Crime and violence **instill fear**
- Availability or perceived **ready access to drugs/ firearms**
- Studies have focused on assessing one factor at a time
- Violence in schools has **long-term community impact**
- ***NEW – Assessing all factors together**

Period of Assessment: April – August 2014

- **Theory Context:**

- Resiliency, Social Control, Social Cognitive, Strain, and Social Disorganization



METHODOLOGY

Population

- 5 schools/communities
- High Risk school and community

Data Collection (past 12mths)

- 51 Itemed questionnaire compiled from a number of sources

Sample

- 10% of the student population by gender and grade (sample of teachers and students)

Data Analysis

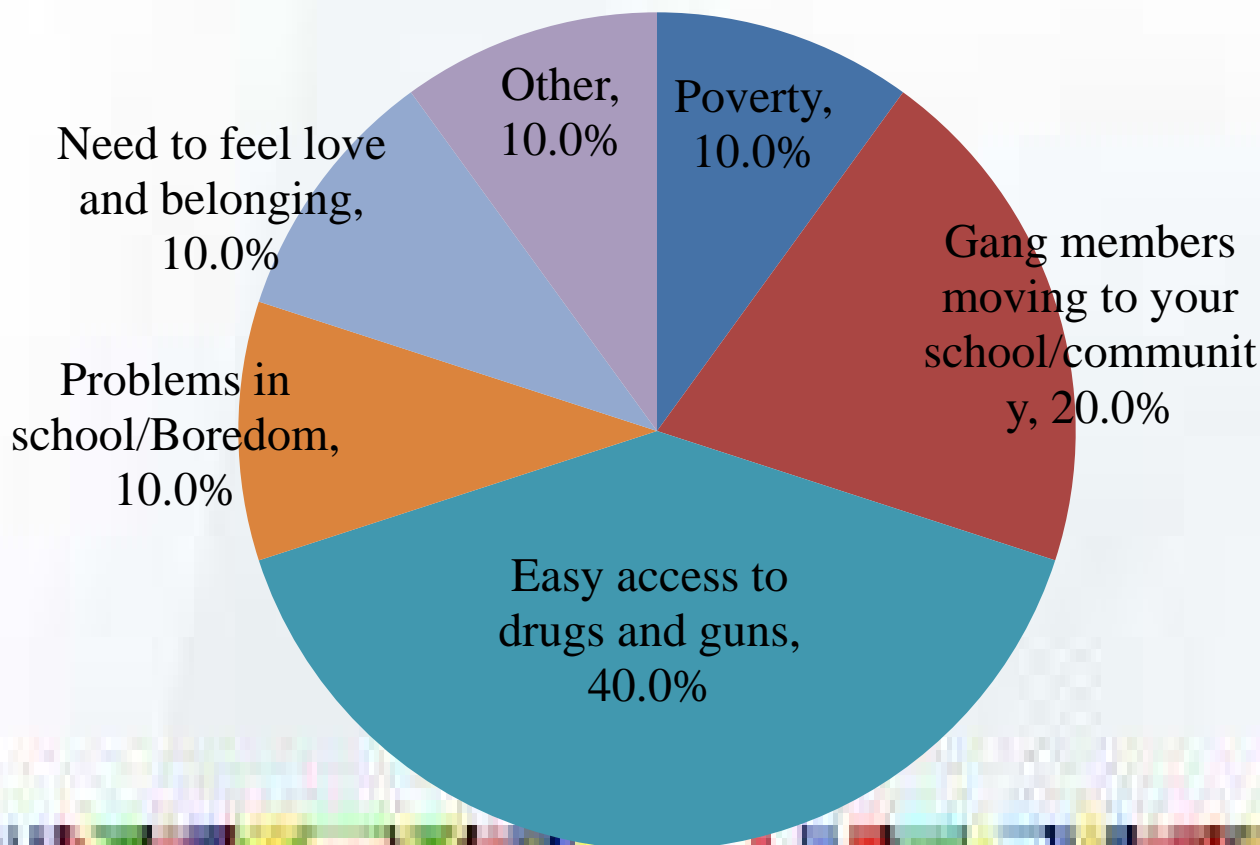
- SPSS
- Content Analysis
- Factor loadings
- Assessed reliability

FINDINGS

Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Traits	n/Percent
Gender n=475	
Male	229/48.2%
Female	246/51.8%
Race/Ethnicity n=485	
Black	336/69.3%
Mixed	105/21.6%
Indian	18/3.7%
All Other	26/5.3%
Age n=498	
11-13	122/24.5%
14-16	327/65.7%
17-19	49/9.8%

Major Reasons for Violence



Most frequently Occurring Types of Violence and Participation

Most Frequently Occurring

Participation



Witnessing Vs. Reporting

Witnessing

Reporting



Findings: Gangs in School

Reported that in the last 12 months, students thought...

Negative

- **69.7%** Gangs were a problem in their school [*n=485*]
- **60.4%** Knew which members of their school joined gangs [*n=475*]
- **69.2%** Been able to list 5 or more incidents of gang in their school [*n=474*]
- **59.8%** Knew when and where most gangs hang out [*n=468*]
- **54.3%** Were afraid of being a victim of fight or violence [*n=466*]
- **61.7%** Wanted to leave school to go to another school [*n=481*]
- **62.1%** Had teachers/adults in their school insult you, put you down, or humiliate them [*n=472*]

Community & Student Findings

Themes from community

- 1) Not enough activities for children
- 2) Increase in crime and violence in their community

Reasons:

- 1) Balance of duties as parents to care and nurture their children with the need to be the breadwinner of the family.
- 2) Unrest in the community that changed from years past. 'bring back our community'.

Themes from students

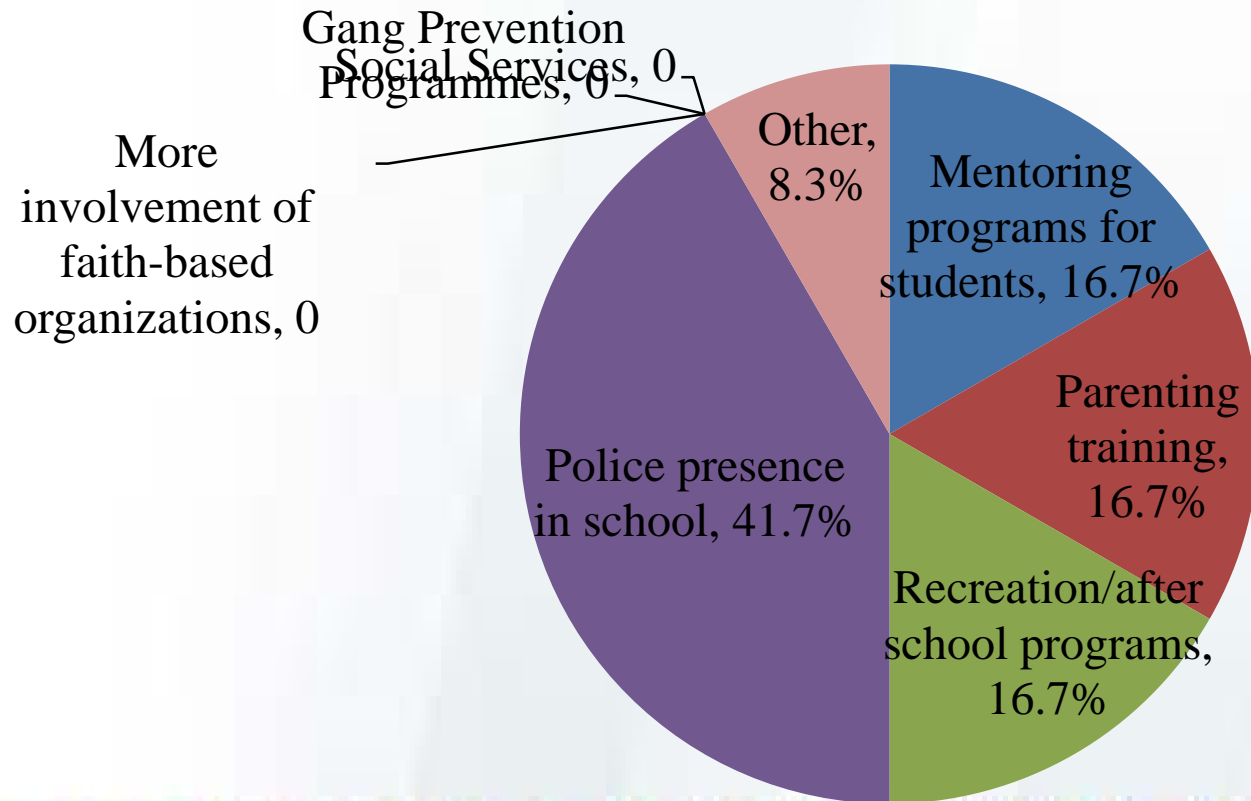
- 1) Wanted to leave their school to go to another
- 2) Do not feel engaged – lack of programming across school for all students
- 3) Concerns of victimization and safety calling for more community presence
- 4) and ensuring that any effort made be done to impact all not only some good students.



Summary of Findings

- All schools showing **above average risk and threats**
- Evidence of **some social controls and aspects of protection against risk (school bonding and protective)**
- Evidence of **impact not reaching all students**
 - Many students want to leave and do not feel engaged
 - Lack of programming a concern across all schools
 - Victimization and safety also a huge concern
- Students experienced increased levels of threat and risk factors in 12mth
- Students reported 2-3 times more activities characterized as threat and risk factors annually
- Protective (2.83) and school bonding factors (3.04) reverse scored - students having 2-3x more experiences with protective and school bonding factors in a 12-month period.
- 4 factors 2+ and 2- States showing above average increased levels of severity for risk and threats and strong measures of intense social controls for protective and school bonding factors.

Strategies for Preventing Violence



Recommendations

- Recognize school environment as direct impact on lives of students'
- Must campaign against out-of-school deterrence for violence
- Reduce risk and threat factors in the school and community
- Increase number of bonding and protective programs for all students
 - E.g. relationship education, life coaching, taking responsibility, life skills
- Use data to draft a strategic plan for response in training, programming, mentoring, parenting partnerships and more.